



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement Regarding Transnistrian Referendum

As delivered by Ambassador Julie Finley
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
September 21, 2006

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On September 17, a referendum referred to as an “independence” referendum was held in Transnistria. As we stated emphatically in July here at the Permanent Council and since then in other venues, we do not recognize the referendum in any way. It cannot be taken seriously or treated as a legitimate vote. No one recognizes the so-called Transnistrian authorities as a legitimate government. As the international community has made clear, Transnistria is a part of Moldova and the referendum should not be recognized as anything other than an attempt to destabilize Moldova.

As President Bush noted in July, and as he told Moldovan Ambassador to the U.S. Chirtoaca earlier this week, the Transnistrian conflict must be resolved in a way that guarantees Moldova’s sovereignty and territorial integrity. We also reiterate our position that Russia must fulfill its 1999 Istanbul Commitments to withdraw all troops and munitions from the territory of the Republic of Moldova. We again urge the Russian government to inform the Transnistrian authorities immediately, and to state publicly, that it will not recognize any claims to independence or support any move to annex Transnistria to the Russian Federation.

We are concerned by Russia’s decision to establish a passport issuance facility in Moldova’s Transnistrian region against the wishes of the Government of Moldova. This move, combined with Moscow’s decision to simplify procedures for Transnistrians seeking Russian citizenship, threatens to undermine Moldova’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.